

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment seeks to place this application in condition for allowance. The instant application is a continuation of Application Serial No. 10/082,247 (hereinafter "the '247 application"), filed February 26, 2002. The '247 application is the National Stage of Japanese Application No. 2001-056953, filed March 1, 2001. The instant application has been amended to reflect the relationship to the '247 application and to perfect the claim of priority. (See, 35 USC §§ 119, 120 and 121). No new matter has been added.

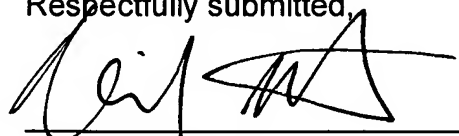
Moreover, pending claims 1-10 have been deleted, without prejudice, and new claims 11-21 have been added to more fully protect certain aspects of the inventions described and illustrated in this application. No new matter has been added.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing Preliminary Amendment prior to examination of this continuation application. Applicants submit that all of the claims present patentable subject matter which definitely set forth the novel and unobvious features of the invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of all of the claims.

Date: March 1, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Neil A. Steinberg", written over a horizontal line.

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